

Congresswoman Louise Slaughter (NY-28), Congressman Chris Lee (NY-26), and Congressman Brian Higgins (NY-27) released the following joint statement regarding the *National Transportation Safety Board's* (NTSB) findings and safety recommendations on the Flight 3407 tragedy that claimed the lives of 50 people on February 12, 2009:

"This report confirms many of the troubling revelations that we heard during the initial round of NTSB hearings this past May. These disclosures were a shock to everyone but especially for families who now know that this horrific tragedy may have been preventable. If there is any consolation, it's that the investigation exposed flaws within the regional air carrier system for operation and training pilots. The failures that led to the Flight 3407 tragedy must be corrected. Being an airline pilot cannot be an entry level job. Our pilots in the cockpit must have the strongest possible training and experience. We need stricter rules in place to combat pilot fatigue, and we need to ensure we have an efficient electronic pilot records database so airlines have all the tools they need to hire truly experienced pilots.

"Now that the final report has been given, it is time for the FAA to step up and do its part to strengthen oversight of the regional air carriers and finally implement the NTSB's most-wanted safety recommendations. We cannot continue to turn a blind eye to the culture of corner-cutting that has left passengers at risk.

"Thanks to the courage and strength of the Flight 3407 families, we have worked to enact bipartisan meaningful airline safety reforms in the House of Representatives. While the House has done its part, the Senate needs to move beyond talk and finally act on these changes we need and airline passengers deserve.

"We have watched our community come together this past year to provide support to the victims' families and rally around their pursuit of answers as to why this horrific accident occurred. We hope that the findings and recommendations we heard today will encourage the FAA and Senate leaders to act quickly to ensure that a tragedy like this never occurs again."

This past year the families of Flight 3407 have worked tirelessly with the Western New York lawmakers and Congressional leaders to spearhead multiple efforts to address much needed aviation safety reforms. Below please find a timeline of legislative efforts to remember the lives lost, investigate and strengthen pilot training, address pilot fatigue, improve pilot records and increase transparency in airline ticket purchasing.

February 25, 2009: The House of Representatives considers [H. Res. 183](#), a resolution introduced by Lee, Higgins and Slaughter expressing condolences to the families, friends, and loved ones of the victims of Continental Connection Flight 3407.

March 4, 2009: The House of Representatives considers [H. Res. 201](#), a resolution introduced by Slaughter, Lee, and Higgins recognizing Beverly Eckert's service to the nation and particularly to the survivors and families of the September 11, 2001, attacks.

May 14, 2009: Western New York lawmakers call for independent investigation of commercial airline pilot training programs. The representatives propose tasking the Government Accountability Office (GAO) with investigating all commercial airline pilot training and certification programs.

May 21, 2009: House approves Lee/Slaughter/Higgins [amendment](#) requiring independent, comprehensive review of commercial airline pilot training programs. The amendment was included in H.R. 915, the FAA Reauthorization Act of 2009.

June 11, 2009: Lee and Slaughter [testify](#) before a hearing of the House Aviation Subcommittee on regional air carriers and pilot workforce issues in the wake of the Flight 3407. The lawmakers outlined their concerns about the culture of cost-cutting that has pervaded the regional air carriers.

June 13, 2009: Lee participates in a 5K run in Clarence Center as part of a very successful event to raise money for the future construction of a Flight 3407 memorial.

July 8, 2009: The [Government Accountability Office](#) (GAO), Congress's official watchdog, accepts the lawmakers request to conduct a comprehensive review of all commercial airline pilot training and certification programs.

July 21, 2009: Higgins and Lee join Rep. Rush Holt in introducing [legislation](#) aimed at providing one level of aviation safety. Under H.R.3273 - Ensuring One Level of Aviation Safety Act of 2009 the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) would be required to implement recommendations by the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) that allows for: Random, unannounced, on-site safety inspections of regional air carriers; New rules to address pilot fatigue; Carriers to have greater access to information about pilot practical test failures; Greater oversight of pilot training schools; And the establishment of a national standard relative to the minimum number of flight hours required for commercial aircraft pilots.

July 29, 2009: Western New York lawmakers join with House Transportation leaders to introduce legislation aimed at addressing aviation safety and restoring passenger confidence. [H.R. 3371](#)

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Airline Safety and Pilot Training Improvement Act of 2009 includes measures to combat pilot fatigue, improve training practices and establish an electronic pilot's records database.

October 1, 2009: Lawmakers send a [letter](#) to Chairman Oberstar and Ranking Member Mica, leaders of the House Transportation Committee to reiterate their strong support for H.R. 3771 and inclusion of critical language central to resolving safety issues. Representatives specifically ask leaders to preserve language in the bill that would require all pilots hired to fly for commercial airlines to hold an Airline Transport Pilot (ATP) license, a key provision to improve aviation safety problems.

October 14, 2009: House passes [legislation](#) (H.R. 3771, Airline Safety and Pilot Training Improvement Act of 2009) introduced by Western New York lawmakers to strengthen aviation safety and pilot training. Among the key provisions of the bill are measures to combat pilot fatigue, increase commercial pilot licensing requirements, improve training practices and establish an electronic pilot records database. Lee and Higgins hold press conference with families of 3407 in D.C. to increase awareness of the legislation.

December 4, 2009: Representatives send a [letter](#) to FAA Administrator Randy Babbitt urging him to implement much-needed guidelines on pilot fatigue and pilot commuting. During a Senate hearing, the FAA Associate Administrator for Aviation Safety Peggy Gilligan announced that the FAA is pushing back its deadline for releasing pilot fatigue guidelines. Gilligan also testified that the FAA will not release any guidelines related to pilot commuting. The NTSB

hearings on Flight 3407 found that both the captain and first officer of Flight 3407 experienced various levels of fatigue.

January 22, 2010: Representatives send a [letter](#) to the Senate Finance Committee urging the quick implementation of much-needed aviation safety improvements contained in the FAA Reauthorization bill.